



**MARICOPA COUNTY
Environmental Services**
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COUNTY FOOD PROTECTION SERVICES NAMED BEST IN THE COUNTRY
Environmental Health Division Receives Prestigious Crumline Award

(Phoenix) — Valley residents have good reason to believe the food they're eating is safe. This is because of the excellent and innovative job County environmental health professionals are doing to protect them. The Maricopa County Environmental Services Department announced today that its environmental health division won the prestigious Crumline Award, a national award given for excellence in food protection.

"People in Maricopa County should feel safer because they are safer," said Maricopa County Chairman Jan Brewer. "County environmental health specialists are doing a thorough job inspecting food establishments and educating people about foodborne illnesses in our community. This award is great recognition for the hard work being done to protect our citizens," Brewer said.

The Crumline Award, named for one of this country's most renowned public health sanitarians, is presented each year to the local public health agency that demonstrates unsurpassed achievement in providing outstanding food protection services to its community. Agencies that win the Crumline Award become model programs for other local public health professionals.

"We're all winners here," said David Ludwig, Environmental Health Division Manager. "The staff who worked so well as a team, the industry who we partnered with, and most of all--the public. Throughout the entire process, every step of the way led in one direction, and that was improving the health and safety of our consumers in Maricopa County," Ludwig said.

The Crumline Award jury, comprised of leading environmental health officials and public health sanitarians, looked for programs that overcame challenges and sustained improvements and excellence while reducing the community's risk from foodborne disease.

Some of Maricopa County's achievements include:

- Computerized, risk-based inspections of almost 30,000 permits;
- Internet posting of inspections at: <http://envquery.maricopa.gov>;
- Serve It Safe Arizona Alliance, the department's food safety education campaign (<http://www.maricopa.gov/sisaz/>);
- Adoption of the 1999 Food Code, which increased training and safety requirements; and
- Nationally recognized foodborne illness investigation program.

Applying for the Crumbine Award meant evaluating the current program, determining weaknesses and challenges, and planning to overcome them. “Here in Maricopa County we were fortunate enough to put a successful plan together that we tackled as a team,” said Ludwig. “I will tell you that placing second nationally the past two years didn’t discourage us, but made us work harder and find other ways to improve.” (View the full award submittal at: <http://www.maricopa.gov/envsvc/ENVHLTH/FSAWARD/Crum1.pdf>.)

The Environmental Health Division of the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department will receive the Crumbine Award at the Annual Education Conference of the National Environmental Health Association in Atlanta on June 30. Award presentations will also be made at the National Association of City and County Health Officials for Food Protection on June 27 in North Carolina, and at the International Association for Food Protection on August 5 in Minneapolis.

About the Environmental Health Division

The Environmental Health Division of the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department reviews and approves construction plans for food production facilities including: restaurants, grocery stores, processors, pet grooming establishments, hotels, boarding homes, supervised care homes and school cafeterias within Maricopa County. Environmental Health issues construction and operating permits, inspects establishments according to the Maricopa County Environmental Health Code and manages other special programs related to foodborne illness outbreaks, education and training.